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Park Denies Reporting To Korea Head on Funds

Associated Press

Tongsun Park said yesterday that he never reported to South Korean President Park Chung Hee on the money he gave to U.S. congressmen and that "I've never been involved in South Korean lobbying."

Park made the statement to reporters after his fifth day of questioning by investigators for the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or ethics committee.

There have been reports that U.S. intelligence learned that President Park, Tongsun Park—who is no relation—and other Korean officials discussed influence buying during a conversation inside the presidential mansion in Seoul called the Blue House.

But Park denied that yesterday when he was asked in a brief hallway interview whether he had ever met with the South Korean president to discuss his contacts with U.S. congressmen.

"No, I don't think I ever had any meeting with him at all," Park answered.

"You don't think?" he was asked. "No, I know," he said.

Asked if he had told the investigators everything he knew about South Korean lobbying, he answered, "I've

never been involved in South Korean lobbying but I told them everything I did."

Another House panel reportedly will disclose details next week on what U.S. intelligence found out about the alleged conversation in President Park's Blue House.

The hearings have been scheduled by a House International Relations subcommittee, whose chairman is Rep. Donald Fraser (D-Minn.). That subcommittee is investigating all South Korean activities in the United States except alleged payments to congressmen, which the ethics committee is investigating.

Ethics committee members said Tongsun Park gave investigators new details yesterday about payments to congressmen, but only verified payments they already knew about.

The committee is trying to determine whether any congressmen should be punished for involvement in alleged influence buying for South Korea.

But Park reportedly has not budged from his contention that he made all the campaign contributions and payments to congressmen as a businessman and not as an agent trying to buy influence for South Korea.

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